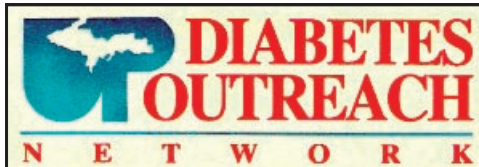




NATIONAL

Diabetes

MONTH



www.diabetesinmichigan.org

American Diabetes Association
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Imagine sending a child into a restaurant to see if they have table and chairs that you can fit in. Picture attending a conference and discovering that you can't squeeze into the desks that are available. Consider not being able to shop locally for clothes because local retailers don't carry clothes in your size.

That was the life of Patty Teeple, an Upper Peninsula Native American woman living with type 2 diabetes, up until this year. Patty grew up in a family of bakers where food was abundant and never denied. By the time she was in the fifth grade, Patty weighed 200 pounds. In 1993, just after the birth of her second child, Patty's weight was 270 pounds. By



2007 she was up to 374 pounds. Things changed for Patty that year when her doctor told her that her diabetes was way out of control. Having been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in 2002, Patty was taking four different oral medications to control her blood sugar but they weren't working. Most of her blood sugars were over 300! Her doctor told her she had three options, have gastric bypass surgery, start using insulin or see a registered dietitian.

Despite the fact that her brother had recently died from complications of uncontrolled diabetes and her father had also lived with diabetes, Patty had successfully avoided the dietitian since her initial diagnosis of type 2 diabetes. Patty decided to see her

dietitian in order to prepare herself for eating changes she would need to make.

That was one and a half years and over 120 pounds ago. Working with Gail Sulander, registered dietitian and diabetes educator at the Sault Tribe in Manistique, Patty started to learn how to take better care of herself. As Patty says, "I was killing myself with food and didn't even realize it."

With education and support from Gail and with the help of her family and friends Patty was able to avoid gastric bypass surgery and the use of insulin. In fact, Patty has reduced the number of diabetes medications she takes and her blood sugar levels are now in the normal range. Patty saw her A1c (a measure of average blood sugar levels over 3 months) drop from 11% to an amazing 5.9%! Patty took control of her diabetes and her weight by eating healthy and getting active.

The first physical activity Patty did was move her body during commercial breaks when she was watching television. She would walk around or just move her arms. Next, Patty started riding an exercise bike. Today she rides the exercise bike or rides outside with her husband and son every day. Patty rides her bike thirty minutes in the morning and thirty minutes in the evening, seven days a week. Patty has learned to schedule exercise on her daily calendar because life can get too crazy and planning for exercise in makes it harder to skip.

On the food side, Patty still continues to include her favorite foods and no foods are off limits to her. She simply eats less of everything. She plans her meals ahead of time and makes certain to start each day with a healthy breakfast, something she never did in the past.

Making changes wasn't easy for Patty. For the first six months she would lie in bed at night and complain to her husband that she was hungry. Self-talk helped her overcome the "false" feelings of hunger. Patty would tell herself, "You are not hungry; you're just learning how to eat normal portion sizes." Patty says that before she started working with Gail, "Every meal was like Thanksgiving. I felt stuffed after every meal."

One of the biggest rewards for Patty is being able to do things with her husband and son. She went to a haunted house with her son this year for the first time ever and this past summer she was able to go hiking with her family. These may seem like small accomplishments to some people but for Patty it is just one more way her life has improved because of the lifestyle changes she has made. Patty wants others to know, "It is up to you to take control of your life. For me, meeting with Gail, a registered dietitian and diabetes educator, and getting support and help from my family was and will continue to be critical to my success."

Native Americans and Diabetes

Diabetes was rare among Native Americans just 50 years ago. Now Native Americans, both adults and children, have one of the highest rates of diabetes across the nation. Almost 8% of all Americans have diabetes. The rate among Native Americans served by the Indian Health Service is 14.5%. Some think this number is underestimated. The Pima and Tohono Oodham Tribes of Arizona have the highest diabetes rate in the world with half of all adults between the ages of 30 and 64 having diabetes. Unless changes occur, other tribes may reach the same level.

The rate of diabetes related complications is also higher for Native Americans. Uncontrolled diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure with rates that are six times higher for Native Americans. Diabetes is also the most frequent cause of foot and leg amputations and amputation rates are three to four times higher for Natives than the general population. Native Americans with diabetes also suffer from vision loss, heart attacks and strokes.

Fortunately for Native Americans living in the Upper Peninsula, all U.P. tribes have diabetes educators and dietitians who can help tribal members control or prevent diabetes and the complications that are linked to diabetes. For more information on where to get diabetes education or nutrition counseling, contact the U.P. Diabetes Outreach Network at 1-800-369-9522.

Small Steps Can Lead to Big Rewards!

Before people develop type 2 diabetes, they almost always have "pre-diabetes"-blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. Recent research shows that some long term damage to the body, especially the heart and circulatory system, may already be occurring during pre-diabetes. Diabetes affects every system in the body, including the nervous and circulatory systems and the immune system. Dysfunction in these three systems sets up a catch-22 situation that can have serious consequences. Research shows that if you take steps to control your blood glucose levels when you have pre-diabetes, you can delay or prevent type 2 diabetes from ever developing.

Take Action NOW....it's EASY! Check with your doctor -

Increase Physical Activity:

- Start slow (even 5 minutes a day) and increase activity by 2 to 3 minutes each week.
- Work up to at least 30-60 minutes, 5 days a week.
- Cleaning and yard work count!

Eat Healthy:

- Eat 5-9 servings of vegetables and fruits each day.
- Switch from "regular" soda/pop to water or diet pop.
- Eat whole fruits instead of juices.
- Eat whole grain foods.
- Lower fat intake.
- Eat 3 servings of low-fat dairy products each day.
- Limit junk food like candy, cookies, ice cream and chips.

Lose Weight:

- If you are overweight, a 5-15 lb. weight loss can help.
- Increase physical activity.

Treat High Blood Pressure:

- Eat fewer salty foods like lunchmeat, canned soup and chips.
- Limit alcohol to no more than 1 drink a day for women or 2 a day for men.
 - Eat healthy (see above).
 - Be physically active.
 - Take medication every day.

Treat High Cholesterol:

- Increase physical activity.
- Decrease fat intake.
 - Include a little healthful fat each day from nuts, seeds, avocados or olive or canola oil.
 - Take your medication if prescribed.



Manage Stress:

- Eliminate unnecessary stress.
- Exercise to feel better.
- Find ways to relax.
- Talk to your doctor or a counselor.

Get Enough Sleep:

- Most people need 7 to 9 hours.
- See your doctor if you have trouble sleeping.

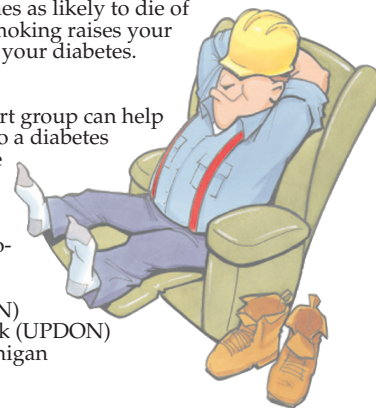
Quit Smoking:

- People with diabetes who smoke are three times as likely to die of cardiovascular disease than non-diabetics. Smoking raises your blood sugar level, making it harder to control your diabetes.

Get Support:

- Sharing your struggles with a friend or support group can help you make changes and stick to them. Speak to a diabetes educator. Get to know your pharmacist. Make sure your doctor, your dentist, your eye specialist and podiatrist are all a part of your health and support team. The care and information they can offer will ease the day-to-day living with this disease.

Michigan Diabetes Outreach Networks (MDON)
Upper Peninsula Diabetes Outreach Network (UPDON)
Strengthening Diabetes Care in Michigan
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COMING NEXT WEEK: Where do I go from here?

This is the third installment in a 4-part weekly series about Diabetes, brought to you by The Mining Journal and these sponsors. For all your diabetic needs, see these businesses:

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